

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9263

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, OAS, PARCA, AR, VE

SUBJECT: PAN AMERICAN RAILWAY CONGRESS ASSOCIATION (PARCA)

REF STATE 219971

1. PARCA PERMANENT COMMISSION MET DEC 5 IN FIRST MEETING SINCE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT AGREED TO HOST NEXT CONGRESS. INSTEAD OF DISCUSSING PLANS FOR CONGRESS, MEETING DEALT PRIMARILY WITH UNEXPECTED RESIGNATIONS OF PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF COMMISSION AND US DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM ASSOCIATION FOLLOWING CARACAS CONGRESS.

2. FIRST ITEM OF BUSINESS WAS ANNOUNCEMENT BY PARCA SECRETARY GENERAL LUCIO HASPERUE THAT HE AND COMMISSION PRESIDENT, MANUEL CASTELLO (WHO DID NOT ATTEND MEETING) HAD PRESENTED THEIR RESIGNATIONS FROM THEIR POSITIONS ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. HASPERUE SUMMARIZED PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION SINCE LAST CONGRESS IN 1968, PARTICULARLY THAT OF FINDING SITE FOR NEXT CONGRESS, VENEZUELAN INTEREST IN HOSTING CONGRESS IN CARACAS, AND HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS THERE IN SEPTEMBER. HE SAID THAT WHILE THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE VERY POSITIVE HE HAD HEARD NOTHING SINCE AND WAS UNABLE TO EVEN SEE HEAD OF VENEZUELAN STATE RAILWAYS ROBERTO AGOSTINI DURING LATTERS

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VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES IN NOVEMBER. HE ALSO DESCRIBED NUMEROUS

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS TO SEE GOA OFFICIALS AND INTERES THEM IN PARCA'S ACTIVITIES. OBVIOUSLY ANNOYED AT CONTINUING SNUBS, HASPERUE SAID HE AND CASTELLO BELIEVED THEIR RESIGNATIONS WERE IN BEST INTEREST OF ASSOCIATION. IN SPITE OF PROTESTATIONS BY OTHER MEMBERS OF COMMISSION, HE INSISTED RESIGNATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WERE FINAL, BUT THAT THEY LIKELY TO REMAIN MEMBERS OF ARGENTINE NATIONAL COMMISSION. MEETING PRESIDED OVER BY FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMISSION, GENERAL JUAN CARLOS DEMARCHI, PRESIDENT OF ARGENTINE NATIONAL COMMISSION, WHO IS NOW ACTING PRESIDENT.

3. US REP ADVISED COMMISSION OF US INTENTION TO WITHDRAW FROM PARCA FOLLOWING CARACAS CONGRESS PER INSTRUCTIONS REFTTEL. DEMARCHI, ON BEHALF OF COMMISSION, EXPRESSED DEEP REGRET OVER DECISION AND HOPE THAT IT WOULD BE RECONSIDERED IF CARACAS MEETING SUCCESSFUL.

4. RESIGNATIONS, PARTICULARLY THAT OF HASPERUE, LIKELY TO HAVE MORE IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON ASSOCIATION THEN ANNOUNCED INTENTION OF US TO WITHDRAW. EMBASSY CONSIDERS HASPERUE ONLY MEMBER OF PRESENT PERMANENT COMMISSION CAPABLE OF ORGANIZING SUCCESSFUL CONGRESS. APPARENT DISINTEREST OF GOA IN ASSOCIATION'S ACTIVITIES AND DELAY IN OBTAINING FORMAL DECREE CONFIRMING GOV OFFER TO HOST CONGRESS ALSO BODE ILL FOR PARCA'S FUTURE.

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